



Layout und Gestaltung: kwh-design

advantage in an immersion program, since they already know what it means to learn a new language. There is no need to fear that learning the immersion language at a young age – be it as a second or as a third language – is too demanding.

**How about the home language?**

Immersion aims for additive bilingualism and multilingualism, which means that the children’s home language should not suffer by learning the immersion language. Special emphasis should therefore be put on an age-appropriate development of the home language and that the home language is actively promoted. If families already promote their language(s) at home, there is no reason to expect deficits.

**Should my child learn the majority language (German) first?**

Families speaking a minority language at home are often afraid that their children will not learn the majority language well, all the more so when the children attend an immersion program. If the home language is actively promoted (in the family), no deficits are to be expected. Children need to learn concepts and content first, no matter in which language. If a child knows what a rabbit is, they can easily learn that it can also be called “Kaninchen”, “adatavsan” (Turkish) or “conejo” (Spanish). They only need to link concepts and new words.

Immersion teachers/caregivers take care that the children also learn the majority language (German) terms. This can be done in the immersion classroom or by cooperation with the subject(s) taught in the majority language (for example German class). In this way the children can learn terms in the immersion and in the majority language (German). In kindergarten and day nursery this dual learning this is achieved by one caregiver speaking only the majority language with the children.

**How can I support my child’s language development?**

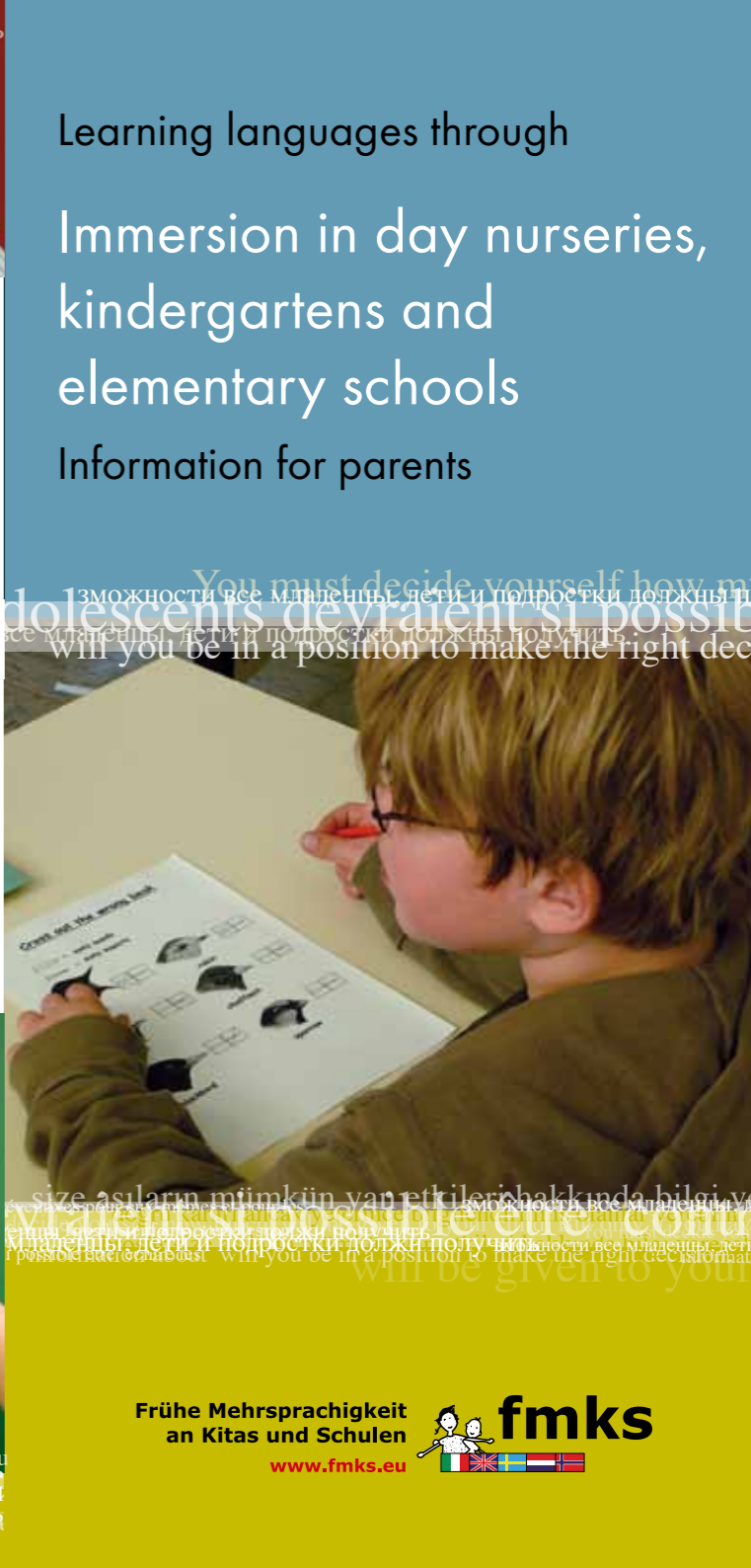
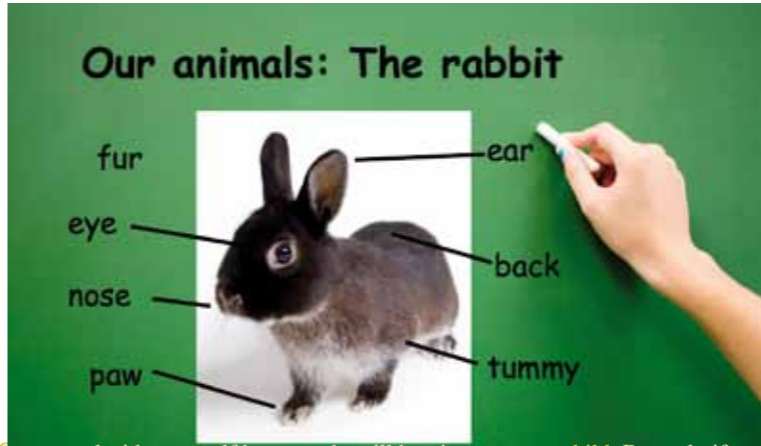
Talk to your child as much as possible in the language you yourself feel most comfortable with. This could be German, Turkish, Albanian or any other language. Encourage your child to talk to you, too, about as many things and topics as possible. TV, videos or DVDs are not adequate substitutes for verbal interaction between you and your child. Reading and joint book reading also helps to strengthen language development. Read a book to or with your child and encourage her to read herself. Visit the public library together and let your child borrow the books he likes, no matter in which language these books are written. It is not recommended that you speak the immersion language with your child, if it is not also the language you feel most comfortable speaking. The same is true for the majority language (German). Otherwise your child will not feel that you are an “adequate” partner in communication and this does more damage to language development than that it helps.

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Learning languages through  
Immersion in day nurseries,  
kindergartens and  
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Information for parents



